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ABSTRACT

This report describes the teacher education reforms at Trinity University (San Antonio, Texas), with special emphasis on the benefits and obstacles encountered along the journey toward the creation and maintenance of effective school-university partnerships. In 1987, Trinity University established the Alliance for Better Schools, a school-university partnership between four schools (two elementary, one middle, and one high school) in one urban and one suburban district and Trinity University. The partnerships were designed to create collaborative environments that would enhance the reform efforts of each partner. Once the partnerships were established, all participants met regularly at the university for ongoing development of a new Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree program (a 5-year program that would replace the traditional 4-year program). Reforms to date have included the requirement of a bachelor's degree in humanities for elementary education students, increased internships and practicum time requirements, formal faculty liaison with the Professional Development Schools (PDSs), development of cohorts of PDS mentors, increases in graduate coursework, and securing of outside funds for support of the additional year. The first comprehensive evaluation of the program took place during the 1994-95 school year. Both graduates and school administrators who had experience with the MAT graduates responded to questionnaires. The amount of time spent in PDS settings was found to be the major strength of the program while weaknesses focused on issues of quality both in the PDSs and in the teacher education coursework. Some suggested improvements concerned: additional instruction on multicultural issues; increased fifth-year funding; and greater variety in intern placements, especially in suburban PDSs. (Contains 41 references.) (NAV)

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Assessing the Effects of Reform in Teacher Education:
An Evaluation of the Five-Year MAT Program at Trinity University

Numerous reforms have been proposed and initiated in the past decade in an effort to improve the quality of teacher preparation (see e.g., Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Goodlad, 1990; 1994; Holmes Group, 1986; 1990; Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1987). Of these, one of the most prevalent has been the creation of the professional development school (PDS). In *Tomorrow's Schools* (Holmes Group, 1990), the PDS is described as a culmination of a "a school for the development of novice professionals, for the continuing development of experienced professionals, and *for the research and development of the teaching profession*" (p. 1). Specifically, partnerships between schools and universities have attempted to broaden the focus from that of cooperation during field placements for preservice teachers to the collaborative renewal and development of each aspect of the educational system. Current estimates of partnerships identified as PDSs range from one to several hundred (Darling-Hammond, 1996; McIntire, 1995). As numbers continue to rise, the PDS promises to become a distinguishing feature of teacher education programs in the next century (Holmes Group, 1995).

With the proliferation of the PDS concept, the need exists for the concurrent development of a substantive body of research regarding issues such as the organization, implementation, and efficacy of school-university partnerships. Several studies hypothesize that this lack of systematic evaluation, research, and development in forerunners of the PDS such as the laboratory school and portal school may have been a contributing factor to the recurring failure of these efforts (Stallings & Kowalski, 1990; Winitzky, Stoddart, & O'Keefe, 1992). Teitel (1994) observes that, in general, reform efforts such as PDSs often begin with great fanfare but soon fade as funding shifts to new programs. To guard against this cyclical pattern, educators need to ask questions such as what obstacles hinder the development of partnerships between two dissimilar institutions, what strategies have various institutions found effective for negotiating impasses, and do PDSs address the developmental needs of beginning teachers better than traditional teacher preparation programs (Kagan, 1992) and, if so, what impact do these differences have on teachers, students, and the educational system as a whole? In their 1990 review of research on PDSs, Stallings and Kowalski report that qualitative and/or quantitative data on the effects of PDS implementation could be found for only three programs. They conclude by stressing that evaluations of programs and their effects must be conducted to construct a body of knowledge regarding the PDS and its effects on teacher preparation (Stallings & Kowalski, 1990). Similarly, Winitzky et al (1992) state that "the recent PDS movement shows great potential but, as yet, has produced little evidence to support expectations that this latest attempt to improve schools and teacher education can achieve its goals" (p. 3). As the decade progresses, research documenting the development and effects of PDSs is

mounting, providing educators a clearer picture of the advantages and challenges inherent in school-university collaborations (see e.g., Darling-Hammond, 1994; Levine, 1992; Moore, 1996; Professional Development Schools, 1992; Teacher Education and Professional Development, 1991; Teacher Education Reform, 1995; Van Zandt & Harlan, 1995). The present study proposes to continue the dialogue regarding teacher education reform vis-a-vis the PDS, documenting benefits and obstacles encountered along the journey toward the creation and maintenance of effective school-university partnerships.

The Five-Year MAT Program at Trinity University

In 1987, Trinity University established the Alliance for Better Schools -- a school-university partnership between four schools (two elementary, one middle, and one high school) in one urban and one suburban district (San Antonio Independent School District and Northeast Independent School District) in San Antonio, Texas, and Trinity University.

The partnerships were designed to create collaborative environments which would enhance the reform efforts of each partner. To illustrate, one elementary school, re-opened in 1988, became the national pilot for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's Basic School, designed by Ernest Boyer around four unifying principles - the school as community, a curriculum with coherence, a climate for learning, and a commitment to character. The university liaison assigned to the school became an integral part of the development of the Basic School, conducting workshops and inservices for school faculty on topics such as writing interdisciplinary units while concurrently teaching the same concepts to preservice teachers through university courses. The university also provided substantial technology resources and training for the school through grants. At the same time, the PDS hosted preservice teachers during practica courses (undergraduate) and for year-long internships during the fifth year (graduate). The school-university model was deemed so effective that the utilization of such partnerships was included as a fundamental component of the Basic School program. Additional PDSs instituted programs such as E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development's Middle Grades School State Policy Initiative, and a magnet high school designed around principles stemming from the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Once partnerships were established, teachers, administrators, university faculty (from academic departments as well as education faculty), and preservice teachers met regularly at Trinity during the 1987-88 school year to develop the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree, a five-year program for the preparation of preservice teachers which gradually replaced the traditional four-year program. The Forum, as it is now known, continues to meet each year to evaluate and revise various program components. Reforms included:

- the requirement of a bachelor's degree in Humanities at the elementary level (a degree created specifically for the MAT program) and in one or more academic disciplines at the secondary level;
- 10 - 12 hours of undergraduate coursework, which includes a minimum of 135 contact hours in PDS practica settings;
- the institution of a year-long internship in a PDS during the fifth year (August to April);
- graduate coursework which parallels the internship experience, emphasizing the connection between educational theory and practice;
- the creation of cohort groups of preservice teachers for progression through the fifth year;
- movement of four university faculty from traditional to clinical positions (tenure track) to provide liaisons with each PDS;
- development of cohorts of PDS mentor as opposed to cooperating teachers who are appointed as clinical faculty of the university; and
- the securing of outside funds for the support of partnership schools and graduate internships.

While Alliance schools share this design in common, the framework also allows PDSs the autonomy and flexibility to tailor aspects of the curriculum to meet the needs of the individuals at each campus. For example, practica students and graduate interns at the middle level PDS study young adolescence and the recommendations for the reorganization of schools, instruction, and curriculum necessary to meet the needs of students ages 10 - 14 (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1986; National Middle School Association, 1982/1992). The internship includes the application of middle level principles through requirements such as membership on an academic team, the development and teaching of advisory units, the incorporation of cooperative learning strategies, participation in a transitional weekend camping retreat for sixth-grade students, and presentations with team members, administrators, and the university liaison at state middle level conferences.

As undergraduates, preservice teachers complete 10 - 12 hours of education coursework in addition to their academic major (Table 1). These include classes on child and adolescent development, school reform and policy issues, as well as three practica courses which place preservice teachers in PDS schools working with mentor teachers, interns, and students. Application for admission into the MAT program normally occurs during the junior year and requires a cumulative GPA of 3.0, letters of recommendation from three individuals acquainted with a student's potential teaching ability, passing of or exemption from the Texas preprofessional skills test, approval by department and university faculty committees, and successful completion of undergraduate education coursework. Each year 20 to 30 percent of the cohort enters the program as post-baccalaureates. Requirements are similar with the addition of a minimum GRE score of 1,000 and an interview with university and PDS faculty. The primary difference is a reduction in

the prerequisite undergraduate education classes from 10 - 12 hours to a minimum of six hours (child and adolescent development course and one practica).

Summer graduate courses in teaching and curriculum inquiry constitute the beginning of the new cohort of interns, which is subdivided into elementary and secondary and then individual PDSs. Based on the constructivist paradigm, classes cover issues such as classroom management, content area reading, alternative assessment strategies, technology in the classroom, and the creation of interdisciplinary units. The year-long internship begins in early August with teacher inservice. In the fall, interns spend four days each week at assigned PDSs from 8 am - 3 pm and attend classes taught by clinical university faculty working with them in the schools Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Curriculum includes models of teaching, multiple intelligences, multicultural issues, educational philosophy, methods instruction for the elementary cohort, an action research project/paper, and pedagogy related to the specific reform efforts of individual PDSs. To link coursework with clinical practice, interns apply the instructional strategies and techniques discussed and modeled in class in their own classrooms. Thc spring semester places interns at PDSs five days a week with one Tuesday evening course at Trinity focusing on leadership and supervision in addition to regularly scheduled PDS cohort debriefings. The final assessment project is the creation of a professional portfolio detailing an intern's journey toward becoming a teacher coupled with a presentation of the portfolio theme to the MAT cohort and school and university faculty.

Since its inception, the program has received national attention and recognition for instituting significant reform in teacher education (Moore, 1996). In December 1991, *The Wall Street Journal* underscored the program's success in recruiting high-quality students to the teaching profession. In *Who Will Teach the Children*, Tyson (1994) devoted a chapter to the Trinity program noting that "an idyllic, expensive, liberal arts college with Ivy League standards is turning out articulate, confident teachers who are well prepared to teach the city's mostly poor, mostly Hispanic public school students" (p. 19). The partnership was also recognized in 1994 by the Association of Teacher Educators as one of several distinguished programs in teacher education. Presently, Trinity University and the partnership schools have been invited to participate in a study by the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching headed by Linda Darling-Hammond focusing on seven highly successful teacher education programs which are both learner-centered and learning-centered. Similarly, the program has been included as one of four in a national study of middle level PDSs funded by the Dewitt Wallace - Reader's Digest Fund, headed by Tom Dickinson and Ken McEwin.

Purpose of the Study

During the 1994-95 school year, the Department of Education at Trinity University conducted the first comprehensive evaluation of the MAT program. The purpose of the study was

to assess and reform components of the teacher education curriculum as well as validate the overall effectiveness of the five-year program. In their review, Galluzzo and Craig (1990) describe these dual purposes of evaluation as investigations of the merit (the value placed on the program by students and faculty) and the worth of a program (the satisfaction of administrators with program graduates), both of which "are important in the design and utility of an evaluation" (p. 599). The study also purported to go beyond the usual purposes of evaluation research (i.e., accountability), incorporating the objectives of improvement and understanding of the processes necessary for the successful preparation of teachers. To do so, the study proposed to answer the following questions:

- *How effective is the program for the preparation of beginning teachers?*
  Specifically: What percentage of graduates remain in the profession as classroom teachers?
  How do Trinity MAT graduates compare to other beginning teachers?
  Will administrators employ program graduates?
- *What are program areas of strength and weakness?*
  Specifically: Does the program foster the development of professional competencies?
  Do differences exist in graduates based on method of entrance into the program?
  Does the PDS site affect the quality of preparation?

Methods and Procedures

Phase One

A 28-item questionnaire constructed to address the above questions was mailed to 149 of the 189 graduates from the 1991, 1992, 1993, and 1994 cohort groups for which current addresses were available (Note: the 1991 cohort was the first to complete the five-year program in its entirety as it exists presently). The instrument gathered both quantitative and qualitative data utilizing a five-item Likert scale (1 - very poorly to 5 - very well), open-ended questions, and a forced-choice format for collecting primarily demographic information. Questionnaires were coded to allow for a follow-up mailing, after which 67 percent of graduates responded by completing and returning the questionnaire (female - 89 percent; male - 11 percent) .

Phase Two

In the second phase of the study, a 24-item questionnaire was constructed similar to the questionnaire used in Phase One and mailed to all principals, assistant principals, and personnel directors in Bexar County (San Antonio) as well as administrators in other cities and states who had had experience with graduates of Trinity's MAT program. The total sample consisted of 652 individuals. A postcard reply was included with each instrument to allow for confidentiality and recording of responses for the follow-up mailing. The response rate for Phase Two was 45 percent, with 91 questionnaires returned completed and 202 returned citing no experience with

program graduates (principals - 53 percent, assistant principals - 35 percent, personnel directors - 5 percent, other - 7 percent) .

Internal consistency reliability was computed using Cronbach's Alpha, which revealed reliability estimates of .8253 and .9486 for questionnaires utilized in Phase One and Phase Two, respectively. In addition to descriptive information, statistical analyses utilized t-test of independence, analysis of variance, and the chi-square procedure to determine if significant differences existed among subgroups of graduates. Qualitative responses were organized by item and coded by frequency of response and key word. Following content analyses, patterns between quantitative data and qualitative categories allowed the construction of predominant themes to answer research questions regarding the effectiveness of various aspects of the MAT program.

Results

Program Effectiveness

Results of the study show that program graduates are well-prepared to meet the variety of challenges facing beginning teachers. On a scale of 1 (very poorly) to 5 (very well), graduates and administrators rated the program as a whole highly, reporting means of 4.44 (SD=.79) and 4.45 (SD=.68) respectively. Moreover, when asked if they would choose the program again for their teacher preparation, 98.8 percent of graduates said they would. One graduate responded that, "My first year colleagues kept saying, 'I can't believe this is your first year.' I was relaxed, confident, and ready to go." Administrators also relayed strong support for the program with statements such as "You are certainly on the right track with the fifth-year intern program. We need more universities to follow suit," and "I think the MAT program should be used as a model for other teacher education programs." Accordingly, 99 percent of administrators said that based on their knowledge of MAT graduates' professional competencies, they would consider hiring a teacher who had graduated from the program. When asked to compare MAT graduates with other first year/beginning teachers, the majority of administrators (85.6 percent) reported that they were better than most, with 13.3 percent rating them equal to most first year/beginning teachers and 1.1 percent rating them poorer than most first year/beginning teachers. In addition, eight graduates noted receiving awards for teaching such as the Sallie Mae First Class Teacher award and district Teacher of the Year. Examples of administrator comments follow:

"The classroom experience during the fifth year definitely enables MAT graduates to enter the classroom during their first year with more confidence and sense of goals for students and how to make them a reality."

"MAT graduates are self assured, confident, and highly responsible. They continuously model a desire to improve the educational setting for their students. They are excellent mentors for other teachers, even though they have few years of experience - they appear knowledgeable beyond their years of 'real life' experience."

"Graduates have a knowledge of instructional practices and use of a variety of teaching strategies that usually I only find with teachers who have four or five years of experience."

"You produce educators who are 'better than the best!' All I've met are articulate, poised, and confident, as well as anxious to learn and grow."

MAT graduates responding to the survey have been teaching in the classroom an average of 2.9 years. Specifically, the percentages of graduates teaching the maximum number of years possible by cohort are 78% (1991), 100% (1992), 92% (1993), 100% (1994). Only 1.1 percent reported no teaching experience beyond the internship. As a result, potential clouding of results by "non-teachers" was deemed minimal, and separate analyses were not conducted for "teaching" and "non-teaching" graduates. Interestingly, the longer an individual had taught, the more favorably s/he rated the program. These findings contradict conclusions from a number of evaluations linking years of experience with significantly less positive ratings of teacher preparation programs (Galluzo & Craig, 1990). Such results are heartening given the traditionally high attrition rates of teachers during their first five years, especially teachers who are the most academically talented (Leslie Huling-Austin, 1990). A growing number of studies suggest that five-year programs and/or internships may address preservice teachers' developmental needs better than traditional programs, thus allowing them to successfully manage the challenges facing beginning teachers and remain in the classroom (Andrew, 1990; Baker, 1993; Oja, Barton, Smith, & Wiseman, 1993; Young & Erb, 1993).

Program Strengths and Weaknesses

To determine program strengths and weaknesses, graduates and administrators were asked to rate graduates' preparation on 15 professional competencies on a scale from 1 (very poorly) to 5 (very well) (Table 2). Open-ended questions were also included which asked both groups to briefly describe program strengths, weaknesses, and specific areas in need of change. Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data resulted in the following groupings:

<u>Strengths of the Five-Year MAT Program</u>

- One-year internship
- Quality PDSs
- Cohort groups
- Professors (those that were good)
- Mentor teachers (those that were good)
- Preparation in:
  - Knowledge of subject matter
  - Instructional strategies and techniques (numerous and up-to-date on latest research)
  - Curriculum design and implementation
  - Reflective problem-solving skills
  - Role of executive
  - Role of leader
  - Role of moral agent

Without argument, the most valuable asset of the program is the year-long internship in a PDS, which appears to provide the time and experiences necessary to develop a range of teaching competencies. Therein, movement through the fifth year in cohort groups and the daily on-campus presence and support of university faculty and committed mentor teachers were cited as essentials for a quality experience. Graduates stated that:

"The full-year teaching experience was the best part. The supportive and visible university faculty everyday helped me through many stressful and emotional events that naturally occur during one's internship. I loved finding my philosophy of teaching - I was truly ready for my own classroom."

"Eight months of being in the classroom was the primary strength. It's wonderful to see how a year flows and be able to prepare and expect changes in you and your students as the year progresses. Also, being able to dialogue, reflect with other interns who know the personalities you're dealing with."

"This program enables student-teachers to experience the difficulties of a first year teacher under the supporting guidance of a master 'mentor' teacher. Essentially, the first year goes very smoothly because of the amount of time we have spent preparing."

"A lifelong friendship and partnership with a wonderful mentor teacher [was a strength of the program].

"The quality of professors was incredible. They always had time to talk and problem solve."

Similarly, administrators commented:

"They [graduates] have one full year of teaching experience in two different grade levels before entering their first teaching assignment. They have learned much of the routine to feel comfortable and assertive that 'real' first year. An excellent five-year program!"

"MAT graduates have a good understanding about the scope and sequence of what is to be taught. This does not mean they are linear in their teaching. It does mean that they are more experienced and are better able to build connections in learning."

"A major strength is that they [graduates] have become involved in a long-term relationship with master teachers and students helping them understand and become an agent in student growth."

"They have the ability to walk into a classroom and take over on day one. They appear to have common sense as well as the education."

In addition, the quality of PDS sites enriched the environment, with respondents commenting on the "innovative programs" and "cutting- edge research" which put them on the forefront of educational reform efforts. Graduates also noted the importance of beginning the internship during teacher inservice, prior to students' arrival in the fall. This allowed them to start the year off as "co-teachers" in the classroom rather than teacher and student-teacher, a relationship many respondents deemed vital to making the student-to-teacher transition. The majority of graduates reported that the combination of the quality and quantity of experiences instilled confidence in their abilities and a sense of empowerment as teachers.

Seven of the 15 professional competencies emerged as notable program strengths. Both graduates and administrators rated knowledge of subject matter as fundamental to the program, stressing that the requirement of a bachelor's degree in a discipline rather than a degree in education served as a solid basis from which to enter the fifth year. Administrators also pointed out the quality of the undergraduate education graduates received at Trinity as a significant factor in the preparation of teachers "who know what they are talking about."

In restructuring teacher education, one objective was to emphasize the connection between educational theory and practice. In so doing, the amount of time spent on teaching instructional strategies and designing and implementing curriculum was increased so that graduates not only understood the theory undergirding a topic but how that information could be applied in the classroom to enhance the learning of all students. Both groups indicated this shift as effective, especially administrators who frequently mentioned the wide range of strategies and curricular models utilized by graduates. One noted that, "There is a cohesion between knowledge and application which makes teaching practices more effective." However, program graduates recommended reducing theory content in the fall semester to an even greater degree than had been done and incorporating additional practical knowledge which was directly transferable to the classroom - what some referred to as the "how-to's" of teaching.

Coupled with practical knowledge about teaching is the necessity for reflection about self, schools, teaching, and learning. One graduate commented that "Reflection is the key. I ask 'why' instead of just 'how.' I continue to value reflection as the best way to improve my teaching." Another wrote, "It [the program] taught me that we should always ask ourselves if what we are doing is the best for the child - is it child- centered?" MAT graduates are seen as highly reflective problem-solvers by administrators as well as themselves. They are also highly competent decision makers and moral agents. One administrator noted that the description of moral agent (continually self-reflecting and improving our craft in light of what is right and good for students) summed up the most important strength of program graduates. A number of administrators and graduates specifically commented that development and presentation of the portfolio reinforced the importance of reflection and inquiry and provided a tool for continuing the process of reflection in the future.

The study revealed that 74 percent of graduates were involved in leadership positions within their schools. Moreover, graduates rated the program's preparation for leadership highest of the 15 professional competencies (M=4.55, SD=.65), with knowledge of subject matter and reflective problem-solving skills ranking second and third, respectively. One administrator commented that, "The program develops strong leadership skills. Those I've worked with have a solid commitment to education and doing what is right for students." Similarly, a graduate stated

that, "The program helped me to think of myself as a leader in a school and to think that being very active in the lives of my students and the school was right and proper."

Weaknesses of the Five-Year MAT Program

- Professors (those that were poor; high turnover; work load)
- Mentor teachers (those that were poor)
- Program expense
- Preparation in:
  - Methods for teaching one or more disciplines (particularly elementary reading and math)
  - Classroom management strategies
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Working with diverse student populations
  - Special-needs students (for those who did not take special education classes)

Several program components listed as strengths also appear as weaknesses when absent from the preservice experience, suggesting their importance in maintaining a quality preparation program. Without doubt, supportive faculty at both the university and the PDSs are key. Graduates noted that they often felt "abandoned" and "given little direction or feedback" from professors who were not visible presences at their schools and from mentor teachers who "didn't seem to want an intern" or who did not understand the fundamental differences between the traditional cooperating teacher and a mentor teacher. Both groups of respondents also noted the negative effect "invisible" university faculty had on the partnership between the university and the PDS. A graduate pointed out that, "If the clinical [university] faculty member is not actively involved at the school level, poor perceptions of Trinity develop." A number of graduates singled out the need to make better matches between professors and PDSs as well as graduate interns and mentor teachers as primary areas for change. Another issue frequently mentioned was the need to reduce university faculty work loads and/or hire additional professors. Graduates commented:

[In response to weaknesses of the program] "Advising professors who are too busy with other responsibilities. MAT students need lots of time to talk, reflect, and problem-solve with their profs."

"Assign one professor to each school and reduce their workload so they can concentrate on the needs of the MAT students."

"My experience with my supervising professor was too distant and far-removed. I received almost no regular/consistent advice or help like interns at other schools did."

"In my case the placement of me with my mentor teacher couldn't have worked out better, but some matches never should have happened. Personality types and learning/teaching styles need to be considered, not for a 'match' but for compatibility."

"As an intern, the quality of your experience is highly dependent on who your mentor teacher is; if you get stuck with a not-so-master teacher, you're going to suffer - so be sure all mentor teachers are truly fabulous!"

Tangential to this issue is the lack of stability of university faculty. Since the program's inception in 1987, no non-tenured faculty member has remained at Trinity more than four years. This has had an effect on the program in general and on one school specifically which suffered from this rotation of faculty more than the others. Graduates interning in the PDS with high faculty turnover and low faculty-school interaction rated the program significantly lower than did graduates of other PDS sites ($p = .0002$).

Another concern which surfaced frequently was simply the high cost of the program. The main suggestion was to include a stipend for the teaching internship. One graduate summed up the thoughts of respondents well, "There has to be some way to better ease the financial strain. I know there are schools where interns are paid at least something. As it is now, I may have to leave teaching because of the financial strain of student loans I incurred. Isn't this defeating the underlying philosophy of the MAT program - to develop outstanding teachers who are going to stay?" While tuition at Trinity is expensive, nearly all graduate interns receive financial assistance through scholarship endowment funds dedicated to the support of teacher interns. The challenge is to continue to look for creative ways of providing such assistance during the fifth year (Moore, 1996).

Of the professional competencies, five of the 15 may need additional attention during the teacher preparation program. MAT program restructuring included the elimination of traditional methods classes such as "Teaching Science" and "Teaching Reading" and the inclusion of general classes focusing on curriculum and pedagogical issues. In so doing, discipline-specific instruction was entrusted to mentor teachers. The study revealed, however, that graduates generally agreed that classes in methods for teaching one or more specific discipline were needed, while the administrator group rated methods preparation in the top third of graduate competencies. One graduate stated that, "For elementary, we need more specific instruction and maybe even courses on techniques for teaching reading and teaching math. Sometimes I didn't agree with my mentor teacher's methods and wished I knew more of my own!" Another problematic issue has surfaced when graduates move and seek certification in states which require methods courses in specific areas for certification. As one graduate noted, "I fully understand and agree with the program's philosophy regarding methods classes; however, without knowing Trinity's reputation for high quality teachers, principals in other states see little reason to hire someone with no courses in how to teach reading and math."

Administrators rated graduates lowest on classroom management strategies ($M=3.94$, $SD=.93$), with graduate responses falling into the midpoint range ($M=4.17$; $SD=.93$). Several administrators listed comments such as, "As with many beginning teachers, classroom management strategies need strengthening, " and "Improvement is primarily needed in the area of classroom management." Graduates also noted that more than one behavior management course

would be helpful because so much depended on the proficiency and latitude of mentor teachers in this area.

While not particularly noticeable statistically, the need for improved interpersonal skills was addressed by more than one-fourth of administrators in the open-ended responses. Selected comments follow:

"Because they are competent and fluent, there are times when I have seen a show of disdain for some of our colleagues who are less open to change, thus interaction with the whole faculty is not always successful. The only other disturbing element I have seen is a bit of rogue behavior that translates to some as arrogance or inappropriate professional behavior."

"Not being able to relate well to students and parents in inner-city schools makes over all strengths less valuable than they otherwise might have been."

Lastly, both groups expressed a need for additional preparation in the areas of working with diverse student populations and special-needs students. Of the 15 proficiencies, these areas were listed more frequently by graduates and administrators than any other single weakness. Comments surfaced such as, "They [graduates] need more experience in working with children of different ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds," and "Require special education training for regular education students. In my district, inclusion is becoming a reality, and I have few tools with which to deal with these kids." Comparisons of graduates completing internships in urban PDSs and suburban PDSs reveal that the means of the "urban" group were significantly higher on both of these proficiencies than the means of the "suburban" group ($p=.0088$). Additionally, means of graduates completing the 10-12 hours of undergraduate coursework were significantly higher than means of graduates entering the program as post-baccalaureates, whether attending Trinity or another institution for their four-year degree ($p=.0415$). One administrator noted that, "The only weaknesses we have found is the lack of educational background the post-baccalaureate students have because they didn't go through the full program." Coupled with the requirement of more classes focusing on teaching the diverse learner, several administrators suggested placements for all interns in settings that were "less protected," more "multicultural," and provided "experiences at the extremes of assignments where most beginning teachers start."

Additional comparisons of graduates based on method of entrance into the program revealed no significant differences in the two groups. Moreover, no differences were found when comparing gender or ethnicity of graduates on professional competencies. As discussed previously, graduates interning in the PDS with high faculty turnover and low faculty-school interaction rated the program significantly lower than did graduates of other PDS sites ($p = .0002$), suggesting the importance of quality collaborations between schools and universities which function as true partnerships.

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Discussion

The study highlighted several "essentials" which help ensure both the quality and quantity of experiences necessary for preparing outstanding teachers in PDSs. On the quantity side, significant time spent in schools immersed in the daily routines of teachers and students is key to successful movement through the developmental growth processes of becoming a teacher. While most student teaching assignments last from 10 to 12 weeks (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990), graduates and administrators agree that the one-year internship beginning with teacher inservice provides the minimum period of time necessary for experiencing and practicing a wide range of teaching circumstances and behaviors. Some findings also suggest benefits for individuals completing three (135 hours) as opposed to one (45 hours) school-based practica prior to beginning the internship year. This agrees with a recent study which found that undergraduates who completed more practica experiences than students entering the program at the graduate level progressed through the stages of teacher development as defined by Berliner (1986), Fuller (1969), and Kagan (1992) at a faster pace than did their peers (McDermott, Gormley, Rothenberg, and Hammer, 1995). A second quantity issue revolves around the number of classes taken in various fields. Again, both groups surveyed confirmed that requirement of a bachelor's degree in one or more disciplines - often resulting in more hours in that discipline than obtained in traditional four-year programs - contributed to a solid knowledge base. Similarly, graduates completing 10-12 hours of undergraduate education coursework may be better prepared for working with diverse student populations and students with special needs than graduates completing fewer courses. The study also revealed that additional classes focusing on methods instruction, classroom management strategies, and teaching diverse learners may be warranted. Third, increasing the variety of field placements for all students which includes spending substantial time in urban school settings may be a critical factor in preparing teachers well-equipped to work with today's diverse student population. Findings indicate that graduates and administrators alike stressed the need for additional preparation for working with diverse as well as special populations of students, with many administrators suggesting mandatory internships in inner-city schools for all graduates. Accordingly, Strawderman and Lindsey (1995) point out that special education and related areas have largely been omitted from reform efforts and propose that field experiences be restructured to include work with special populations in addition to the infusion of instruction into existing courses which deals with inclusion and other issues related to teaching diverse learners.

While the amount of time spent in PDS settings was touted as the major strength of the program, weaknesses focused largely on issues of quality, which are infinitely more difficult to mandate than number of courses or hours in schools. Foremost among these was the context of the PDS. In their review of research on student teaching and school experiences, Guyton and McIntyre (1990) cite a number of studies arguing the importance of school context and its impact

on preservice teachers' experiences. Failure to pay attention to variables such as classroom environment, the cooperating teacher, the overall "health" of the school, and the relationship between the school and university often results in negative rather than positive influences on student teachers, placing them in settings Clinchy (1994) refers to as decontextualized and disconnected from the real world of teaching.

Goodlad (1994) points out that, "We are not likely to have good schools without a continuing supply of excellent teachers. Nor are we likely to have excellent teachers unless they are immersed in exemplary schools for a significant portion of their induction into teaching" (p. 1). Establishing partnerships with schools engaged in reform efforts congruent with the educational philosophy of the university creates learning communities in which preservice teachers can integrate theory and practice in a supportive, reflective environment. One way this occurs is by matching graduate interns with teachers who encourage and support the development of strategies and techniques discussed in university classes as well as their own schools. Winitzky et al (1992) report that a potential obstacle to successful school-university collaborations is the ongoing discrepancy between the didactic and constructivist views of teaching and learning espoused by the school and university, respectively. Another requisite step is to ensure that university faculty not only support prospective teachers but are also actively involved in the school reform process and invested in outcomes relevant to both the school and the university culture. A number of studies report that university faculty are the most important variable in the success or failure of such collaborative efforts and that lack of attention to issues such as the incongruence of school and university reward systems and the unique combination of personal traits needed for site-based work may lead to the demise of the PDS and related partnerships (see e.g., Evans, 1995; Minner, Varner, & Prater, 1995; Rodriguez & Breck, 1995). Cohort groups which provide peer support through the establishment of lifelong friendships also surface as vital links in creating environments of reflection, acceptance, and trust. In a similar partnership program, Cabello, Eckmier, and Baghieri (1995) found that the support and collegiality that develops among preservice teachers progressing through a program together is one of four primary strengths reported by students. When the above conditions necessary for establishing a positive collaborative environment are not met, PDSs appear little better than traditional field placements in furthering the development of preservice teachers.

Conclusion

It is important to remember that improvement is always possible and indeed necessary, even in the best of circumstances. Such studies force educators to reflect on their own efforts and provide direction for continued reform. To date, several steps have been taken to address issues disclosed in the study.

• A new faculty member was hired to work with the troubled PDS. This individual appears to be a good match for the school and has developed a renewed sense of trust in the university among PDS administration and faculty.

• The faculty has accelerated efforts toward mentor development, which includes conducting several weekend and summer retreats with mentor teachers which focus on reevaluating the goals of individual PDSs concerning teacher education and school reform issues through the process of shared decision making. In addition, one to two mentor teachers at each PDS have been designated PDS coordinator(s). In this role, they teach undergraduate practica courses which involves not only assigning students to classrooms for practica hours but holding weekly discussion meetings with preservice teachers and other PDS faculty on site, allowing a greater number of mentor teachers increased involvement with students in the program.

• To address graduate's concerns regarding the need for additional instructional strategies in the fall semester, faculty have included coverage of a wider range of models of teaching and moved this portion of the curriculum to early in the fall semester, beginning the bulk of theory discussion in late November.

• Additional instruction on multicultural issues and strategies for working with diverse students has been added to the fifth-year curriculum. At the undergraduate level, a three-hour course on working with exceptional children has been added to the recommended course of study. Tentative plans which would infuse special education curriculum into the fifth-year for all students are also being discussed.

• Significant new monies have been allocated for endowments to fund fifth-year internships.

• Ongoing discussions with university and PDS faculty have addressed the possibility of ensuring greater variety in intern placements during the fifth year, especially in suburban PDSs.

The program may continually struggle with some issues, such as the expense of the five-year program as well as graduates' desire for methodology courses which are not feasible given both the backgrounds and teaching loads of the eight-member department. Continual evaluation of the program will also be an ongoing process, especially the development of experimental studies which minimize limitations inherent in survey research. However, we agree with Minner et al (1995) that "the path to reform lies through the doors of schools" (p. 67), and that path has been both fulfilling and meaningful to those invested in the creation and development of quality faculties and schools for our nation's children.

Table 1
MAT Education Coursework: Undergraduate and Graduate

Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Year Five - Graduate (MAT Degree Awarded)	
EDUC 697 Clinical Practice EDUC 695 Pedagogics	EDUC 998 Advanced Clinical Practice EDUC 396 School Leadership, Supervision, and Evaluation
Summer	
EDUC 392 Teaching Inquiry and Practice EDUC 391 Curriculum Inquiry and Practice	
Year Four - Senior (BA or BS Degree Awarded)	
EDUC 321 Schooling in America	EDUC 124 Practicum: The Student
Year Three - Junior (Apply for Admission to Teacher Education)	
EDUC 322 Growing up in America *EDUC 371 Exceptional Children	EDUC 123 Practicum: The Master Teacher
Year Two - Sophomore	
EDUC 107 Practicum: The School	EDUC 108 Seminar: The Child in Society
Year One- First Year	
*EDUC 105: Seminar: Current Issues in Education	*EDUC 106 Seminar: School and Community

NOTE: Course hours are determined by the first digit - e.g., EDUC 105 is a one-hour seminar.
* Courses recommended not required (EDUC 371 added Fall 1995)

Table 2
Group Means and Standard Deviations for Professional Competencies
(Likert scale 1 - very poorly to 5 - very well)

Item	Graduates Mean	SD	Administrators Mean	SD
Preparation of MAT graduates for teaching overall	4.44	.79	4.45	.68
Preparation in specific areas:				
Knowledge of subject matter	4.54	.71	4.48	.62
Methods for teaching one or more discipline	3.81	1.04	4.38	.68
Instructional techniques and strategies	4.04	.97	4.48	.72
Curriculum design and implementation	4.17	.93	4.31	.78
Classroom management strategies	4.17	.93	3.94	.93
Reflective problem-solving skills	4.50	.67	4.32	.77
Interpersonal skills (communicating and relating to students and colleagues)	4.31	.85	4.26	.79
Working with diverse student populations	4.17	.84	4.10	.97
Special-needs students (special education, at-risk, gifted, etc.)	3.72	1.03	4.02	.90
Evaluation and assess-ment techniques	3.93	.91	4.27	.70

Table 2 (cont'd)
Group Means and Standard Deviations for Professional Competencies
(Likert scale 1 - very poorly to 5 - very well)

Item	Graduates Mean	SD	Administrators Mean	SD
Program preparation for assuming the following roles:				
Role of manager (use of stepwise procedures for managing the flow of learning)	4.07	.87	4.23	.68
Role of executive (decision-making and problem-solving based on research of teaching)	4.35	.79	4.25	.73
Role of mediator (facilitating students' higher-level interactions with learning)	4.18	.86	4.19	.80
Role of leader (modeling a love for life-long learning and fostering it among students)	4.55	.65	4.43	.67
Role of moral agent (continually self-reflecting and improving our craft in light of what is right and good for students)	4.47	.80	4.34	.76

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